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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

THURSDAY, JUNE 7, 2007

In Today's Papers

Thousands Attend Funerals of Troops Slain by the PKK

All papers give extensive front page coverage to the funerals of the gendarmes killed by the PKK militants in an attack on a military outpost in the eastern province of Tunceli earlier this week. Tens of thousands in the cities of Istanbul, Balikesir, Amasya, Kayseri, Sirnak and Izmir, waving Turkish flags, attended the funerals. Those in the funeral procession in the southeastern province of Sirnak chanted slogans in both Turkish and Kurdish condemning the terrorist PKK. Funeral participants in Izmir protested Prime Minister Erdogan and his ruling AKP. "Terror condemned at seven funerals in Turkey," "Turkey sees off its martyrs with tears and anger," and "In Sirnak, hundreds protest against terror in Kurdish at the funeral of slain soldier," were some of the headlines.

Reports Claiming Turkish Incursion into Northern Iraq Denied

All papers report Ankara denied an Associated Press (AP) report that several thousand Turkish troops crossed into northern Iraq early Wednesday in pursuit of the PKK militants based there. AP quoted two senior Turkish security officials as saying the raid was limited in scope. Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul rejected the reports, saying "There is no incursion into any country at the moment." Prime Minister Erdogan said that parliament's approval was needed for an incursion into northern Iraq, but adding any operation couldn't be announced publicly. Turkey's parliament, now in recess ahead of a July general election, would have to reconvene to authorize any military operation against Iraq. Washington and Baghdad also said there was no new activity in northern Iraq. Papers quote White House spokesman (sic) Gordon Johndroe as saying at the G8 summit in Germany, "Both the Turkish government and US officials on the ground say it's not occurring. There's been no new activity to lead to these press reports."

The Turkish General Staff (TGS) announced on its webpage that the southeastern provinces of Hakkari, Siirt and Sirnak would be

considered "high security regions" until September 9. The ban will restrict land and air access to the region. Hurriyet says the ban on entry to and exit from Sirnak and Hakkari, which are on the border with Iraq, amounts to "emergency rule" along the border. Prime Minister Erdogan said the enforcement was "normal," and that it did not mean "emergency rule." Responding to a question, the PM said he would not meet on the issue with the "tribal leaders" in northern Iraq, but with Iraq's central government in Baghdad if necessary.

Zaman reports 50,000 troops now occupy a region around the Gabar, Cudi and Bakok mountains in a sweeping operation underway across 11 eastern and southeastern provinces, with helicopters and jetfighters supporting the troops. Meanwhile, six soldiers were wounded when a remote control PKK landmine exploded in Diyarbakir's Lice township. Two villagers in the border province of Sirnak were killed when they stepped on a landmine believed to have been planted by the PKK.

Editorial Commentary on Iraq

Zafer Atay wrote in the business and political daily Dunya (6/7): "Secretary Rice was advising Turkey not to carry out a cross-border operation and emphasizing that the US and Turkey are very close. If that is a sincere statement, how come the US just sits and watches as the PKK terrorists in Northern Iraq carry out their acts against Turkey? The American military lost about 4,000 lives in Iraq in the fight against terror, while at the same time the US let terrorists use Iraq as a base against Turkey, which is supposed to be a strategic ally of the US. Meanwhile the terrorists by intensifying their acts are aiming force Turkey into a cross-border operation. By achieving that goal, they hope to draw Turkey into a confrontation with both the US and Talabani, so that PKK terrorists in Iraq will be able to get away with murder. Our so-called strategic ally and so-called friends should read Turkish people's

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fury and agony as well as the fed-up sentiment very carefully. If they do not take this feeling into account, anything unexpected can happen."

Fikret Ertan wrote in the Islamist-leaning daily Zaman (6/7): "The US believes it is necessary to maintain a military presence in Iraq for a long time. Otherwise, it is feared that an early withdrawal from Iraq will turn the country into a Taliban-Al Qaeda controlled country like Afghanistan. And those groups will directly target the US. A long-term stay in Iraq requires permanent military bases -- something the US has been working on with the Iraqi administration. The administration's approach is also shared by most of the Democratic Party members. The Korea model has been mentioned as one of the proposed formulas for the Americans in Iraq. However the Korea model was designed to protect that country from outside threats. In the case of Iraq the primary focus should be Iraq itself since the threats against stability and security come from inside. Regardless of the decision on the model, the US seems very committed to maintaining a military presence in Iraq as a long term strategy."

DP Offers Alliance to Anavatan

Radikal, Hurriyet, Zaman, Milliyet and others: Failing to merge earlier into a center right coalition, DP and ANAP were in contact again to try to establish an election alliance. Mainstream Milliyet reports that President of Ankara Chamber of Commerce Sinan Aygun met with DP chairman Agar and Vice Chairman Mumtaz Yavuz and drew their attention to the fact that neither party could cross the 10% election threshold individually. Following this meeting DP leader Agar and ANAP leader Mumcu had a telephone conversation last night and decided to meet today. Reportedly, they are planning to form a CHP-DSP type election cooperation. If they reach an agreement, ANAP candidates will be nominated from 24 provinces where DP had not put forward any candidates names to the Supreme Election Board.

Turkey-US Economic Action Plan

Hurriyet, Radikal, Milliyet: A US Trade delegation led by US Deputy Secretary of Commerce David Sampson yesterday met with the Turkish

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State Minister for Foreign Trade Kursad Tuzmen and Union of Chambers

and Commodity Exchanges (TOBB) President Rifat Hisarciklioglu. Mainstream Milliyet says that prior to the meeting, State Minister Tuzmen stated that Turkey plans to expand trade volume with the United States and urged the US to invest more in Turkey. Mainstream Hurriyet reports that US Deputy Secretary of Commerce David Sampson, during his meeting with TOBB president Hisarciklioglu, said that 'there aren't many countries as successful as Turkey on the issue of economic reforms.' Highlighting the importance of the trade and industrial chambers in the economy, Sampson stressed that the economic and trade relations between Turkey and the US should be expanded.

TV Highlights

NTV

Domestic News

- June 8 is the last day for political parties to submit the final changes in their lists of parliamentary candidates to the Supreme Election Board.
- Turkey's Alevi associations, infuriated by the efforts of AKP and MHP to lure Alevi voters, next month will hold a meeting to make a decision regarding their own positions.
- The Pakistani drug baron Khan Mohammed Khan has been captured by Turkish police at Ataturk Airport in Istanbul while trying to travel to the Netherlands. The suspect is said to be the last member of a ring trafficking narcotics to raise funds for al-Qaeda.
- Moody's said a Turkish military incursion into northern Iraq would

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cause instability in the country.

- The Eurasia Transportation Forum, a global platform designed to help improve the oil and gas transportation environment in the region, is to be held June 24-25 in Istanbul.

International News

- Greek Cypriot papers have published a "list of shame" of Greek Cypriots who have applied to Turkish Cypriot authorities for the settlement of property disputes.
- UN war crimes prosecutor Carla del Ponte praised Serbia for "serious commitment" to the handover of war crimes fugitives, saying "other positive results" might be seen before her June 18 formal report.
- Basque separatists have urged the European Union to step in and help reestablish the peace process with the Spanish government.
- Finland's foreign ministry said three Finnish nationals have been arrested by Iran for allegedly entering Iranian territorial waters during a fishing trip in the Gulf.

WILSON